

**TOP SECRET**

DCI

20 December 1962

FOR BUNDY EYES ONLY FROM PARROTT

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[redacted] - unregulated

1. As you know, weather conditions have made high-level reconnaissance of parts of China and of North Vietnam impossible since last summer. Forecasters now predict extraordinary polar high which will make conditions ideal for ~~two~~ or three days beginning tomorrow morning. Opportunity may not reoccur for months.

2. South China area bordering North Vietnam was considered top priority by Special Group 9 November. In accordance approval in principle by higher authority 1 November this mission was given go-ahead and has only awaited weather since.

3. However USIB has since determined SZICHUAN basin in South Central China higher priority [redacted]

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4. In addition SecState and DCI now most anxious more precise information on North Vietnam soonest.

5. In view above and weather, following is wanted:

a) SZICHUAN basin TACKLE [redacted]

*Approval needed*  
~~Should alert~~ by 1300

E8T today.

b) South China border area TACKLE day after (a) completed.

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c) North Vietnam [redacted]

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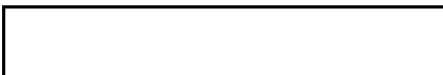
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In order

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avoid Laos this mission would cross Burma for about 75 miles or 11 minutes each way and stray slightly over China. Should alert this one also by 1300 today although could wait a day.

6. My own review of policy approvals leads to following conclusions:
  - a) South China approved number of times. Approval in effect and mission can go whenever weather permits.
  - b) Basin included in higher authority's approval in principle. 1 November for quote China end quote. Special Group did not recommend 9 November only on basis priorities then obtaining. Therefore if SG now gives priority this is all that is required.
  - c) North Vietnam exactly same as (b).
7. Other members of SG bless all three above. However DCI wants your concurrence as Chairman.
8. Apologize for extremely short notice but blame on unexpected weather. Could you telephone your office your decision soonest? Suggest could be handled by referring to para <sup>5</sup> above in terms of (a) (b) and (c) - go, no go or wait. (I should reiterate wait essentially tantamount to no go.)

*Bundy replied with an OK,*

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